

PLANNING COMMISSION

ACTION MINUTES

TUESDAY, MAY 2, 2000

Chair Parsons called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. at Twin Pines Senior and Community Center.

PRESENT, COMMISSIONERS: Phillips, Purcell, Petersen, Peirona, Mathewson, Parsons

ABSENT, COMMISSIONER: Wiecha

PRESENT, STAFF: Principal Planner de Melo, City Attorney Savaree, Recording Secretary Wong

AGENDA STUDY SESSION: None.

AGENDA AMENDMENTS: None.

COMMUNITY FORUM (Public Comments): None.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Action Minutes of April 4, 2000

MOTION: By Commissioner Mathewson, seconded by Commissioner Phillips to approve the minutes with amendments. The motion passed.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Public Hearing - 554 El Camino Real; To consider a conditional use permit and design review to allow a wireless telecommunications facility that consists of two (2) wall mounted antennas and a 10' x 20' (200 sq. ft.) equipment shelter to be located at an existing U-Haul storage site (Appl. No. 00-1006); APN: 044-201-070 and -080; Zoned: C-3/D-1; CEQA Status: Exempt; Nextel Communications (Applicant); U-Haul Real Estate Company (Owner)

Principal Planner de Melo presented the staff report recommending approval with conditions.

In response to Commissioners Parsons and Purcell's questions, Principal Planner de Melo replied that: 1) a representative with Cellular One had agreed with the revised landscape plan, and 2) there were no required setbacks for the equipment shelters.

Molly Kales, Nextel Communications, stated that she had read the staff report and accepted the conditions of approval. She said that she was available to answer any questions.

Chair Parsons opened the public hearing. No one came forward to speak.

MOTION: By Commissioner Peirona, seconded by Commissioner Mathewson to close the public hearing. The motion passed.

The Commission's comments included: concerned about equipment shelters located on the property and the unattractive six ft. chain link fence; there would probably be a 22' U-Haul truck parked in front of the equipment shelter; the chain link fence would be unobtrusive unless one was on top looking

down at it; and wondered if there was enough room to drive around on site to avoid the equipment shelters.

Principal Planner de Melo stated that it was a very large site with adequate aisle widths for vehicles.

Chair Parsons stated that there was a new green-coated chain link fence in the front which would be nice if these matched. In response to Commissioner Purcell, Ms. Kales replied that the equipment shelter would be a beige color.

MOTION: By Commissioner Peirona, seconded by Commissioner Parsons to approve Resolution No. 2000-21 approving a conditional use permit/design review to allow a wireless communication facility at 554 El Camino Real:

AYES: Phillips, Mathewson, Petersen, Peirona, Parsons

NOES: Purcell

ABSENT: Wiecha

Chair Parsons announced that the Commission's decision could be appealed to the City Council within ten days.

Public Hearing - 19 Somerset Ct.; To consider a conditional use permit to amend a detailed development plan to allow a 340 sq. ft. addition to an existing two-story home for a total of 3,127.7 sq. ft. of floor area where a maximum of 3,500 sq. ft. is allowed (Appl. No. 00-1025); APN: 045-472-280; Zoned: P.D.; CEQA Status: Exempt; Hayes Group (Applicant); Greg Ellis and Anne Le (Owners)

Chair Parsons announced that this item would be continued to May 16, 2000.

Public Hearing - 915 North Rd.; To consider a design review to construct a ground floor addition of approximately 800 sq. ft. to an existing 1,252 sq. ft. home. The addition includes the expansion of an existing bedroom, and a new family room, office, and bathroom. The proposed new total would be 2,052 sq. ft. with the expanded area to be located at the rear of the dwelling (Appl. No. 00-1017); APN: 044-141-070; Zoned: R-2; CEQA Status: Exempt; Frank Gonsalves (Applicant); Mr. and Mrs. Greg Wendt (Owners)

Principal Planner de Melo presented the staff report recommending approval with conditions. In response to the Commission's questions, he replied that the fireplace which protruded into the garage would be removed, and the proposal met the side yard setback requirements.

Chair Parsons opened the public hearing.

Greg Wendt, owner, stated that he and his wife both telecommuted and would like to maintain the closet for storage of office paraphernalia and file cabinets which were currently stored in the garage. He also asked for clarification of the Department of Public Works' conditions of approval referring to a new drainage pipe, storm water drainage, and TV inspection of the sanitary sewer lines.

Principal Planner de Melo responded that when staff received conditions of approval from other departments, sometimes they were from a standard conditions of approval list and were a bit onerous for a single-family addition. He said that staff would work with the applicant and the affected department to clean up some of these issues.

Regarding the existing driveway, Mr. Wendt agreed that it might be narrow by today's standards but it was sufficient for their vehicles and was not in serious disrepair. He preferred not to impinge on the ivy fence or the hedge row in order to maintain the quaint, bungalow appearance of the front of the house. In response to Commissioner Mathewson, Mr. Wendt replied that he was not currently keeping a car in the garage but was using the garage as a workplace. He expected that with the removal of the fireplace he would be able to park his wife's car in the garage. Mr. Wendt added that, at the suggestion of his architect, the third bath would be roughed in for possible future use but in the meantime it would be used as a storage area for some of the equipment currently stored in the garage.

Frank Gonsalves, 490 El Camino Real, project architect, expressed concern about the costs of meeting some of the Department of Public Works conditions of approval.

In response to Commissioner Mathewson, Mr. Gonsalves stated that the driveway was about 10' wide and appeared to be of standard appearance in this area.

MOTION: By Commissioner Purcell, seconded by Commissioner Mathewson to close the public hearing. The motion passed,

The Commission's comments included: thought that it would be ludicrous to have a driveway wider than the garage; in favor of leaving the driveway as it was but would like to see a newer driveway with less pavement; and commented that the office could be used as a bedroom even with the removal of the closet, and would probably be used as a bedroom if the house was sold.

MOTION: By Commissioner Purcell, seconded by Commissioner Mathewson to approve Resolution No. 2000-22 approving a design review application for a single-family residential addition at 915 North Road and 1) to remove condition I.D. regarding the closet, and 2) staff to work with the applicant and the Department of Public Works regarding their conditions of approval, specifically to delete condition II.A.14 referencing the driveway:

AYES: Mathewson, Purcell, Petersen, Peirona, Phillips, Parsons

ABSENT: Wiecha

Chair Parsons announced that the Commission's decision could be appealed to the City Council within ten days.

At 7:50 p.m., Chair Parsons called for a recess. The meeting reconvened at 7:52 p.m.

Public Hearing - 600A El Camino Real; Preliminary Design Review for a rental car facility in an existing 2,900 sq. ft. building (Appl. No. 00-1027); APN: 044-222-060; Zoned: C-3; Hertz Local Edition (Applicant); Richard Rhodes (Owner)

Principal Planner de Melo presented the staff report. Chair Parsons asked if the applicant would like to speak.

Tom Royce, representing Hertz Corporation, stated that he was available to answer any questions. In response to the Commission, he replied that there was a driveway on the north side of the building which was shared with the property to the north that allowed access to an existing parking area with delineated parking spaces. Mr. Royce said that they were proposing to carve out an additional parking area that would extend to the building line to the rear and would provide additional parking spaces and

an area where cars could make a turn around without having to access El Camino Real to exit the site. Required grading would be minimal but details needed to be worked out.

Chair Parsons was doubtful about the ability to provide parking for 15 rental cars, the handicapped parking space, and the employee parking area. He would like to see a striped layout of the parking area. Chair Parsons would like to see landscaping and work on the façade in terms of materials and window treatments.

Commissioner Phillips felt that the project had a lot of merit and would enjoy seeing the property renovated and a solid company like Hertz move into the location. He felt that the Planning staff and Chair Parsons had outlined the Commission's concerns and would like to see the answers to those issues before he could make a motion on approving the project.

Chair Parsons asked where the cars would be washed and detailed and Commissioner Phillips added that they would like to see gray water collected so that it did not end up in the storm drain system. Commissioner Purcell asked about the intended use of the interior space behind the offices.

A representative from Hertz stated that it was a framed in garage area where cars would be vacuumed and touched up and that cars would not be washed on site. The cars would be refueled and washed at an alternate (local gas station) site. He apologized for the plans and added that the landscape plans were currently being prepared and they were open to addressing all of the Commission's concerns.

Principal Planner de Melo stated that the handicapped parking area would be relocated because it did not meet current code requirements.

The Commission's comments included: felt that this was a fabulous use for the site; would rather see a denser project in the whole area of El Camino Real, including housing but would not be sorry if the current proposal went in there; and suggested that the applicant re-work their plans to include the Commission and staff's comments and return at a later date.

Public Hearing - 1506 Escondido Way; To consider a design review and floor area ratio exception to construct a ground floor and second story addition of approximately 827-sq. ft. to an existing 3,973 sq. ft. home. The proposed new total would be 4,800 sq. ft. where the maximum permitted is 4,500 sq. ft. The site contains a 15% slope that permits a 0.519 floor area ratio (FAR). Without the Ordinance cap, the permitted floor area would be 13,930 sq. ft. The existing FAR is 0.148 and the proposed FAR is 0.179 (Appl. No. 00-1016); APN: 045-101-170; Zoned: R-1H; CEQA Status: Exempt; Jerrod Ewell (Applicant); Angela and Mike Shine (Owners)

Principal Planner de Melo presented the staff report recommending approval and said that he would work with the applicant and other departments to be sure that the conditions of approval were proper for the proposed use. In response to Commissioner Purcell, Principal Planner de Melo reiterated that the proposed square footage included the covered porch, the breezeway, the accessory buildings, and the in-law unit.

Chair Parsons opened the public hearing.

Angela Shine, 1506 Escondido Way, owner, stated that she had lived in Belmont for 23 years and would not want to leave after the proposed addition was completed. She knew that she could work with the

Commission and staff to get the project through. Mrs. Shine submitted another letter of support from another neighbor.

Principal Planner de Melo stated that no negative feedback had been received from adjacent property owners or anyone else. A call was received from a resident on Escondido Way who had considered pursuing a FAR exception and wanted to see the outcome of this application before making a decision.

Chair Parsons confirmed with the owner that her mother lived in the secondary dwelling unit. He added that the front porch was not deep enough to be a porch and was a covered walkway and was not usable indoor space.

Commissioner Purcell stated that she loved the project but did not believe it met finding #3 and suggested pulling the cabana towards the house which would eliminate the breezeway or combining sheds.

Mrs. Shine stated the breezeway was added to allow access to the back and the cabana was engineered to make it stable.

Commissioner Purcell feared that granting a FAR exception would create a new precedent.

Commissioner Peirona felt that the project would fit with the neighborhood and the street. Chair Parsons reminded the Commissioners that thinking in terms of compatibility with existing residences and neighboring properties was another way of looking at it and rather than debate it they should move on to other issues.

In response to Commissioner Purcell's concern about square footage, Principal Planner de Melo explained that the existing enclosed area was 3,651 sq. ft., 322 sq. ft. was for the covered entry porch and the breezeway, and the proposed 827 sq. ft. included the master bedroom, office, family room, and loft.

Commissioner Purcell stated that the Belmont ordinance must be considered every single time for every project but was reminded by other Commissioners there were floor area ratio exceptions and why these issues must be considered. Commissioner Mathewson stated that he could make finding #3 because he thought it was compatible.

MOTION: By Commissioner Peirona, seconded by Commissioner Phillips to close the public hearing. The motion passed.

MOTION: By Commissioner Peirona, seconded by Commissioner Phillips to approve Resolution No. 2000-23 approving a floor area ratio exception and design review at 1506 Escondido Way:

AYES: Petersen, Peirona, Phillips, Mathewson, Parsons

NOES: Purcell

ABSENT: Wiecha

Chair Parsons announced that the Commission's decision could be appealed to the City Council within ten days.

REPORTS, STUDIES, UPDATES, AND COMMENTS

Regarding the recently installed sidewalk in front of Max's, Chair Parsons reminded staff that the landscape and design plans included the planting of trees by the City, and with the exception of the one existing acacia tree, there were no trees in front of the buildings. He would like staff to work with the Department of Public Works to come back to the Commission with a plan to add trees in front of those buildings. Commissioner Peirona believed that the same would apply to the eastern side of the street. Principal Planner de Melo stated that the tree configuration would have to match the existing trees in front of Safeway and staff would work with the Department of Public Works to assure that the proper trees were installed.

Chair Parsons was concerned about the design detail of the curved wall to be installed in front of Blockbuster. He would like to see how it would look as it went around the corner on both sides.

Commissioner Purcell asked that the trees be installed so that they didn't hamper women with strollers and wheelchairs.

Commissioner Purcell welcomed Walt Shjeflo, who was present as the liaison from the Parks and Recreation Commission. This raised the question as to whether the Planning Commission should consider appointing liaisons to other City Commissions.

Commissioners Purcell and Parsons updated the Commission on the Transportation Summit held at Oracle Corporation on April 28.

Commissioner Mathewson asked about a letter from Margaret Cunningham regarding RFP's for Village Center Block #4 placed in front of the Commission tonight. City Attorney Savaree stated that since the item was not on the agenda and could not be discussed that she and Principal Planner de Melo would follow up on the item.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair

After discussion as to whether the election should be postponed until all Commissioners were present, Commissioner Phillips: 1) announced that he had prepared a letter of resignation, and 2) stated that he felt that Commissioner Wiecha should not object to the election being held without her vote and that she had implied that she was not interested in being Chair.

Recording Secretary Wong tallied the written ballots and announced that Commissioner Parsons was reelected as Chair and Commissioner Mathewson was elected as Vice Chair.

Commissioner Phillips read his letter of resignation from the Planning Commission mentioning its many past accomplishments and wishing the Commission much success in the future, and citing his desire to use his extra time to achieve some serious personal goals.

Chair Parsons announced that Commissioner Phillips would definitely be missed. Chair Parsons asked staff to inform the Council that there was a vacancy on the Commission.

The meeting adjourned at 9:08 p.m. to meet in a joint meeting with the City Council at 6:00 p.m. May 16, 2000, and a regular meeting immediately following the joint meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Marjorie W. Macris, AICP
Interim Planning Commission Secretary